

NOAA Coastal Services Center

COASTAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP

Fellow Selection Announcement

November 2000

Overview

Purpose of the Fellowship Program

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Management Fellowship was established to provide on-the-job education and training opportunities for postgraduate students in coastal resource management and policy and to provide specific technical assistance for state coastal resource management programs. The program matches highly qualified, recently graduated master's, professional, and doctoral degree students with hosts around the U.S. in state coastal zone management (CZM) programs. The recipients will work for two years on substantive state-level coastal resource management issues that pertain to federal management policies and regulations. The recipients are designated NOAA coastal management fellows.

Fellowship Philosophy

The NOAA coastal management fellows should be given every opportunity for professional and educational training and growth. They should be integral players in either existing or new coastal management projects involving critical state issues. The portion of each project involving a fellow should be able to be completed within the two years of the fellowship. The fellows should be fully integrated into the CZM staff to learn from the experiences of their co-workers. To further their educational growth, fellows also should be allowed to attend professional meetings and workshops and prepare reports and papers.

Mentoring

Mentors are key individuals in the fellowship program. Fellows must have a mentor within the state agency to guide them on project-specific issues as well as on professional and long-term goals. In addition, the mentor must help integrate the fellow into the daily life of the state coastal agency. It is the mentor's responsibility to ensure the fellow has the resources, training, and support needed to successfully complete the project.

Because mentoring is so important to the success of the fellowship experience, all mentors and fellows will need to complete a joint mentoring statement within the first several months of the fellowship. This statement will include an agreement between the fellow and mentor regarding the mentor's role in the project, the fellow's career development, and the fellow's integration into the state agency.

Fellowships

Seven competitive postgraduate fellowships will be awarded for meritorious recent master's, professional, and doctoral degree recipients to spend two years working with coastal resource management agencies on state-level needs and federal management issues.

State coastal zone programs submitted project proposals to compete for placement of one of the coastal management fellows. The project selection process was completed before the fellow selection process to give prospective fellows better guidance as to the nature of the fellowship for which they are competing. As the projects are being selected independently of the fellows and because the Center wishes to broaden the educational experience of selected fellows, fellows are likely to be serving outside their home state.

Project Selection and Information

All states with federally approved CZM programs and states developing such programs were eligible to submit one application for the program to the Center. All eligible agencies were notified of the project proposal application process by mail in September 2000, and projects were selected in November 2000. Seven states will serve as hosts to the 2001 coastal management fellows. The following provides short summaries of the selected projects; all fellow finalists will receive copies of the full project descriptions for each state.

- **Connecticut:** The project offered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Office of Long Island Sound Programs is entitled "Public Access to Coastal Environments (PACE)." The outcome of this project is the development of a public access database and Web site. The fellow will develop a comprehensive GIS database to help the state organize, analyze, and share information related to public access to coastal environments in Connecticut.
- **Delaware:** The Delaware Coastal Program's project is entitled "Tracking and Monitoring System for Coastal Non-point Pollution Control Program." The outcome of this project is a fully integrated digital database and tracking system for implementation of Delaware's Coastal Non-point Source Pollution Control Program (CNPCP). The fellow will develop a timely and efficient system for tracking non-point pollution control activities, create a method for analyzing the effectiveness of the CNPCP on water quality control, and begin the long-term collection of data about program areas requiring improvements.
- **Maine:** The Maine Coastal Program's project is entitled "Creating a Sustainable Beach Community at Camp Ellis, Maine." The purpose of this project is to develop a beach nourishment policy, create a hazard mitigation plan, and utilize public participation in the solution process. Additionally, the fellow will explore local, state, and federal funding options.

- **Michigan:** The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Land and Water Management Division's project is entitled "Environmental Protection for Coastal Communities: A Guide for Local Governments." The fellow will be tasked with all phases of the guidebook, including: research, development, final composition, and development of a guidebook. The fellow will also develop a guidebook dissemination strategy.
- **New Jersey:** The State of New Jersey will be conducting an in-depth review and assessment of its coastal zone management program, and is seeking a fellow to facilitate this process. The fellow will be responsible for defining ocean governance as it applies specifically to New Jersey and the implementation of the approved coastal zone management program.
- **Pennsylvania:** The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Office for River Basin Cooperation is offering a project entitled "Expanding the Pennsylvania Sea Grant Program Through State and Regional Approaches in Aquatic Nuisance Species and Fish Consumption Advisories." The goal of the project is to develop a comprehensive exotic aquatic species program and fish consumption education initiative. The fellow will also be tasked to develop an outreach campaign.
- **South Carolina:** The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Office of Coastal Resource Management is offering a project entitled "Stormwater Management System Inspection Program." The project is designed to develop a stormwater management system that addresses the policy, procedural and data management shortfalls in the current permitting program that relate to long-term maintenance of stormwater management systems. The project will include assessment of current stormwater management procedures, legal analysis of maintenance and inspection requirements, baseline field inspections of systems, and fiscal analysis of inspection program.

Fellow Selection Process

Eligibility

Any student who has completed a master's, doctoral, or professional degree program in environmental management, coastal, aquatic, or related studies at any accredited U.S. institution of higher education in 2000, or will complete all degree requirements by July 30, 2001, is eligible to apply through the state Sea Grant program nearest their residence or graduate institution. States and proposals differ from year to year.

Fellowship projects encompass a wide variety of environmental and natural resource management disciplines. Applicants should consider the skills necessary to achieve project goals when reviewing the state proposals. In most cases, it is beneficial to have strong communication and analytical skills in addition to the expertise required for specific projects.

Calendar of Project Application Process (Fiscal Year 2001)

Fellowship Announcement	November 20, 2000
Applications Due to Sea Grant Directors	January 31, 2001
Sea Grant Directors Submit Top Two Applicants to the Center	February 28, 2001*
Selection of Finalists	March 19, 2001
Finalists Notified by Phone	March 20 to 22, 2001
Fellow Matching Workshop	April 2001 (in Charleston, SC)
Fellow Trip to Matched State Program	TBD between fellow and state
Fellow Start Date	August 1, 2001

- * Must be received at the Center by 5pm Eastern Time) on this date. Nominations received after this date will not be considered. Nominations cannot be accepted via e-mail or FAX.

Fellow Application Requirements

The Center, in cooperation with the Coastal States Organization, the National Sea Grant College Program Office, NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), and the University of Southern Mississippi is seeking applications from qualified individuals to compete for fellowship projects.

All fellowship applications must include:

1. A personal résumé or *curriculum vitae*.
2. An educational and career goal statement from the applicant with emphasis on what the prospective fellow expects from the experience. The applicant may state preference in terms of geographic placement or topic of focus. Prospective fellows should keep in mind that limited descriptions of placement or topic will make final placement more difficult.
3. Two letters of recommendation, including one from the student's major professor.
4. A detailed letter of endorsement from the sponsoring state Sea Grant director, as a result of a face-to-face or phone interview, addressing such important topics as communication skills, philosophical approach toward work, and ability to work with people.
5. Copies of all undergraduate and graduate student transcripts.

All fellow applicants will be evaluated and chosen only on their qualifications; therefore, letters of endorsements from individuals such as members of Congress, friends, and/or relatives should not be submitted.

Fellow Candidate Evaluation Criteria (with maximum possible points)

Fellow applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria for selection of the 14 finalists:

- Professional goal statement -- 25 points
- Strength of academic performance -- 15 points
- Support of Sea Grant director -- 10 points
- Support of references -- 10 points
- Diversity of academic background -- 10 points
- Diversity and strength of extracurricular activities (internships, volunteer work) and awards and honors -- 10 points
- Experience in natural resource management or marine affairs -- 10 points
- Communication skills (oral, written, and interpersonal) -- 10 points

All qualified applicants will be considered regardless of age, race, sex, creed, marital status, national origin, lawful political affiliation, religious preference or non-disqualifying physical handicap. Academic discipline, geographic representation, and individual state coastal program needs will be considered in balancing the class.

Fellow Selection Procedures

Applications must be submitted to the Sea Grant program office nearest the applicant's residence or graduate institution **no later than January 31, 2001**. Applications submitted to the Center will not be considered. The Sea Grant director, or a designee, will review all applications. Applications that do not conform to the requirements may not receive further consideration. The completed application package, along with a letter of endorsement by the nominating Sea Grant director, will be submitted to the NOAA Coastal Services Center at the address listed below under the "Application and Information" section of this announcement.

A finalist selection panel will be convened in March 2001 to review and recommend selection of the top 14 fellow applicants using the criteria outlined above. This selection panel will present its recommendations to the deciding official, the Center's Coastal Management Services Branch Chief. The panel will consist of the Coastal States Organization Executive Director, the Center Coastal Management Fellowship Program Manager, and representatives from Sea Grant, NOAA Office of Coastal Resource Management, a coastal zone management program, and a current fellow. Representatives from these groups will be chosen according to availability, timing, and other exigencies. Final decisions will be made by March 19, 2001, and all fellow applicants will be notified of the selection decision by the end of the following week.

Placement Process

Although the 14 selected fellow applicants will be considered finalists, only 7 of them will become fellows and be placed with state coastal management program hosts. Each of the selected host states will send a representative, preferably the fellow mentor, to the final placement workshop in Charleston, South Carolina in April 2001. The 14 fellow finalists will be brought to the workshop at the expense of the Center for final interviews and placement. The workshop will serve as the final selection and placement point and consist of (1) fellowship orientation program, (2) host office project proposal presentations, (3) finalist presentations, (4) finalist-host interviews, and (5) fellow matching.

In late March, the Center will send each finalist a packet of information detailing the interview process that occurs during the placement workshop in Charleston. This packet will include information on each of the coastal management projects, the host agencies, and background on the area of assignment. No contact between prospective hosts and finalists should be made prior to the placement workshop.

Fellowship Program

Stipend and Expenses

Each fellow will receive \$30,000 in stipend and per diem per year. Expenses in excess of this amount include (1) benefits, including health insurance and worker's compensation; (2) relocation reimbursement; and (3) travel associated with the fellowship experience (see also Travel Requests). The University of Southern Mississippi (hereafter referred to as "Cooperator") will administer the fellow's pay and benefits through a cooperative agreement with the NOAA Coastal Services Center.

Reporting/Evaluation Requirements

In addition to developing the mutual mentoring statement as discussed previously (see "Mentoring" on page one), the fellow and mentor will meet within the first several months of the fellowship to develop the fellow's professional development and project-related goals. At the end of one year and at the end of the fellowship, the mentor and fellow will meet to discuss how well these goals were met. Open communication between the fellow and mentor is the key to a successful experience and developing these goals and then discussing how well they are being achieved is one way to facilitate effective communication. The mentor and fellow also will be asked to each complete a brief written evaluation of the program in August of each year.

Coastal management fellows will be administratively responsible to the cooperator. The hosting state coastal program will provide day-to-day and technical direction. The role of Coastal Management Fellowship Program manager is one of ombudsman between the fellow and the state host agency.

Travel Requests/Training

Travel funds have been allocated to facilitate the fellows' educational growth and professional development. All travel arrangements must be made through the cooperator. This support may include conferences, workshops, short-courses, or similar opportunities. Each year the fellows will be required to attend the meeting of either the Coastal Society (on even years) or the Coastal Zone (on odd years) to meet as a group.

Any travel associated with the fellow's project, including field work, attendance at regional or local meetings, etc., must be covered by the state agency.

In January or February of each year, the Center will pay for the fellows to attend a 2-day meeting at the Center. The purpose of this meeting is to facilitate communication among the fellows and between the fellows and Center staff. It provides the fellows with an opportunity to obtain technical information from Center staff on project-related questions.

Host-Fellow Relationship

The NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship is a professional development and educational opportunity. Through the fellowship program, state hosts provide fellows with professional, on-the-job training in state and local coastal resource management decision making. The fellow and the host must be sensitive to their mutual responsibilities in achieving a balance between office requirements and professional development. The fellow should honor the working protocols of the host office and contribute to useful and relevant products. At the same time, the host is expected to provide opportunities for involvement in substantive issues that honor legitimate professional, educational, and developmental activities of the fellow. State mentors should be fully vested in the program and available to the fellows for support and advice.

Participation in the fellowship program is a privilege. To maintain this privilege, fellows must continue to demonstrate diligence and adaptability to the host environment. The Coastal Management Fellowship Program manager after due consultation with, and consideration of, the mutual rights and interests of the fellow, the host, and the cooperator, will adjudicate problems that may arise.

Application and Information

Application for fellowship positions will be due to state Sea Grant directors **no later than January 31, 2001**. Each Sea Grant director may nominate up to two qualified candidates. These nominations are due to the Center no later than 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) on February 28, 2001. Send completed nomination packages to:

NOAA Coastal Services Center
Coastal Management Fellow Selection
Attn: Jan Kucklick, Fellowship Manager
2234 South Hobson Avenue
Charleston, SC 29405-2413

For more information, contact Jan Kucklick at (843) 740-1279 or Jan.Kucklick@noaa.gov.